



## 'She is our bright light' Woman adopts 1-year-old girl

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Flanked by two beautiful daughters, Sherri Hanna added a third Tuesday during the fourth annual Michigan Adoption Day.

"You are officially Kara Grace Renee Hanna," Jackson County Probate Judge Susan Vandercook declared as the 1-year-old danced and squealed on the counsel table.

Assisting Vandercook was Michigan Supreme Court Justice Stephen Markman, whose fellow justices spread across the state to promote adoptions.

More than 1,100 children have been adopted statewide in the four adoption days.

"This is one of the very few nice things that happen in a courtroom," Markman said. "This is a wonderful occasion."

Vandercook, who will retire at the end of the year, wore her adoption robe decorated with zoo animals.

"It is nice we can all be a part of this," she said, noting Kara was the youngest child of a half dozen adopted before her or Circuit Judge John McBain on Tuesday.

Hanna raised her daughters, Ashli and Alyssa, after divorcing when they were little. She has been a foster mother to toddlers and infants for four or five years.

"I love babies. I love children," she said.

Kara arrived a year ago to the Hanna household and turned 1 on Oct. 27. She seemed to celebrate along with the courtroom Tuesday, constantly clapping and dancing in her jean dress, pink sweater and patent leather shoes.

"We have been through a lot in the last few years with illnesses and deaths," Hanna said. "She is our bright light."

Little detail was offered about her background, except that she apparently is lucky to be healthy and in a good home. She was placed in foster care as part of an abuse-and-neglect case.

"She might not have lived but for the Hanna family," Hanna's friend, Debbi VanMeer, told the court. "She has a precious, supportive, grateful family in which to grow up."

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